/667 cont./

595 The intention of having more children is not a reason for
581 /668/ polygamy among the Yamana, for the Indian women are very
842 fertile, and no one could remember a childless woman in earlier times. Most cases of polygamy arose from the fact that a man who was already living with one or two women also took in a solitary widow, ĕlátakakīpa. The latter perhaps did not find an opportunity for a new marriage with a bachelor or did not wish to return to her family group, and the man took her chiefly because he felt sorry for her. Whether or not he sometimes had intercourse with her, both knew from the start that they could not expect children from their union. Hence, it was actually the right of sanctuary which the husband granted this widow. In the strict sense of the word one cannot call such a life together a marriage.

595 In 1920 Walter explained to me how our Yamana must also
177 make allowances for the changes forced on them by European civilization. His father had three women in his hut simultaneously, with whom he had marital relations. At that time there was already a shortage of men on Lennox Island and environs, that is to say, in the eastern group of the Yamana. Hence the women forced themselves on the few men in order to find sanctuary somewhere. From among his many brothers and sisters, Walter had for several years been the only one living. Here is another case. The young Halakwulup, Julia, had fled from a brutal European and found refuge on the farm near Punta Remolino. She could scarcely come to any understanding with the Yamana and lived very much to herself. She was treated in a friendly fashion and was supported by the Indian women there, but as a solitary woman with a son a year old she could no longer make out by herself. There was no suitable Yamana youth who could be her husband. Finally Manuel, who was about 35 years old and was married to fifteen-year-old Emilia, took pity on her and took her into his hut as his second wife (p. 439).

The quiet acceptance of polygamy brings with it the surprising phenomenon that married people are separated by a considerable age difference (55), which is not regarded as an obstacle

55. "An elderly man will be found often to possess two young wives in addition to one his

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1. Delight in the Child

842 We must say without qualification that the Yamana of all ages and of both sexes are extremely fond of children. The child is so necessarily a part of marriage that a newly wedded couple awaits the first fruit of their mutual love with longing. As long as a child has not been granted them, they feel as though they have nothing to do and do not know how to fill out the day properly. The young woman, far more than the man, feels an oppressive emptiness and a great gap which must be filled, the sooner the better. This mental state was described by Walter in the following brief words: /695/ "Soon after the wedding the couple become bored, for they lack children of their own to keep them busy. That is why the young woman, in order to ease her loneliness, visits her parents longer and oftener than her husband likes. He therefore waits patiently until the first child arrives. After that his wife stays with him in their own hut (107)!"

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107. This is the chief reason why some young married couples after their wedding live with the parents of one of them before they establish their own household (p. 434).

Gertie, who had no offspring herself, confessed to me: "Until their first child appears, time is often unbearably long for the young couple. You can imagine what I suffer who have lost all hope for a child of my own!" In former times it was extremely rare that a marriage was barren. Such a married couple is very much pitied by the neighborhood. They try to cover their loss by temporarily taking into their hut and caring for a few children from among their relatives or acquaintances. Old people seem to be particularly dependent on the company of the little ones. Actually they are the most enjoyable entertainment and the jolliest diversion for all the adults. They tease each other and play freely and without restraint, as though the children were accommodating and ardently desired playthings. The natural open-heartedness with which old women tenderly fondled and affectionately caressed any child, especially

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immediately around its neck, or about its person" /cited in English/ (109). Later, after they had become sufficiently convinced

> 109. Snow (b):262 was so impressed by the love of children shown by these Fuegian mothers that he again speaks of his experiences and calls it unjust toward the parents that the missionaries wanted to take a few children for training to Isla Keppel. "One of the women had a baby with her, and there was something most winning in her manner when she asked us to give her child some present. She was much attached to her babe, even as I found all of the Fuegian mothers were, and I feel certain that to attempt taking those younger children away on any pretence whatever is wrong in the extreme... They are very fond of their children" /cited in English/.

of the kindliness of the missionaries for their children, a few families finally decided to entrust them with their darlings for a short time (p. 310 /untranslated/). Today Yamana children are much more suspicious of even the most well-intentioned Whites than I observed the children of the Selk'nam (110) to be, because they have had

> 110. On my first journey I effortlessly gained the confidence of the Selk'nam by way of the hearts of their children. See Gusinde (t):164 and (dd):78.

many sad experiences.

● 842 Now it will no longer be surprising to learn -- corresponding exactly to the ideas above -- that a married couple is envied because of their large flock of children. As each individual child provides great joy for the married couple, their happiness and satisfaction increase with the number of their offspring. "The more children, the more entertainment and variety in the hut on the long evenings," Walter confessed to me in a moment of deep sorrow when his youngest girl, who, with her slightly older brother, was what remained of eleven children, fell seriously ill. I often heard

1: Gusinde--488 I-5 (1918-1924) 1937 SIRI Yahgan 1988

/496 cont./

variations of this exclamation: "How fortunate Felipe and Elisa are, for all their [six] children are still living and occupying their hut!" There is no other family of the few that are left who can show so many living offspring.

Naturally, each one of the children is an object of special attention for the parents and all the adults. This is less evident in the fact that they keep the child physically closer than in their tireless vigilance and in all kinds of demonstrations of love (111).

111. Bridges (i):21 confirms this: "Generally the children were tenderly cared for by their parents and friends, and ceremonies of every kind expressed in order to please the parents" /cited in English/.

They are not happy if a child is absent from the hut for long hours and they do not know where he is, but quite in /497/ contrast to European mothers, they remain completely calm no matter how long the child is absent if they do know where he is staying or where he went, on foot or in the canoe. They are beside themselves, however, if they have to wait for the child far beyond a fixed time. Once, late at night, I saw old Pedro and his wife get up and prepare to drag their canoe into the water. Someone had just reported to them that their seven-year-old daughter had gone on foot with some other girls to a distant inlet and that they had not returned. Although the neighbors, some of whose children were also absent, tried to reassure the old man, they could not hold him back. He rowed a great distance along Beagle Channel until, after a search, he found his daughter. Finally, early in the morning, they were all united in his hut, along with the other children (see Gusinde [c]:184). In order to appreciate this effort we must remember that a family ventures out on the water at night only in the greatest emergency.

Very often and lovingly parents fondle and play with an infant or an older child. They let them have particularly delectable tidbits, call their attention to rare phenomena in the environment, decorate them with ornaments of all kinds, and often paint their faces for their pleasure (112). Again and again the adults busy

112. As Bridges (i):22 and (k):288 reports.

/699 cont./

855 children whom death has taken away; a woman is ashamed if complainn, however indirect, reach her about her disobedient scamp; and a woman may feel something like jealousy when it seems as though the offspring of another woman are the only ones possessing all the good traits. No one blames the father when, in proud self-content, he measures his sturdy boy and praises many of his qualities to the other men in expectation of great achievements later on.

842 Who could therefore doubt that parents in Tierra del Fuego always want still more children? Even if their number increases from year to year, the parents never tire of additional offspring, who hardly increase their worry and their work perceptibly, yet augment their happiness considerably. A large brood of children does not 855 mean a noticeable burden because the older brothers and sisters like to help take care of their younger brothers and sisters. Many women go through difficult inner struggles when, with the menopause, they are no longer blessed with children. This is all the more the case if they do not have many offspring.

847 Nevertheless, voluntary abortion is practiced, but as Fred Lawrence emphatically assured me in August, 1923, only very rarely and secretly by the woman herself. She resorts to it as a means of avoiding imminent disgrace when she has had a secret affair with a lover and does not wish her lawful husband to learn of her transgression. Moreover, there must be certainty that she became pregnant only by the lover, which can almost never be determined under the existing conditions. When I inquired about this for the first time in February, 1920, I obtained the following from my conversation with several men who were gathered around old Alfredo and who agreed with his opinion: "It seems that in rare cases a woman did get rid of her child and it was the child of her lover. She did so because she was afraid of being exposed and reprimanded by her lawful husband." What seemed at that time to be only a supposition on my part became a qualified probability on my fourth journey.

Now, how does a woman go about this unfortunate deed? Before the child under her heart has reached a certain size so that her condition could be recognized, she presses and manages her abdomen vigorously until the embryo dies and she has a miscarriage (115).

115.Hahn (a):805 also mentions this method.

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847 who died after the third miscarriage, and likewise of Felipe's wife, who complained to me that she had had two premature births. Malicious women unjustifiably reproach these two, saying that they had consciously transgressed. Hence it is certain that willful abortion, which is undertaken secretly by a woman, is extremely rare. Abortive medicines from the animal and vegetable kingdom are unknown.

855 Love for their own child guides the parents in everything they regard as good and advantageous for it. Many customs and individual child-rearing methods have developed from long experience; they are a safe rule of conduct for the parents in the care and treatment of their darlings. To deviate from them is prohibited by the respect they steadfastly cherish for the ancient tribal heritage handed down by their ancestors.

2. Birth

•842 Our Yamana regard giving birth as a natural function, but in their conversation they treat this matter with genteel reserve. The connection between sexual intercourse and conception is sufficiently clear to them. They could not refrain from laughing when we mentioned to them that there were some groups of human beings to whom these facts were apparently not known. If one asks them specifically about the origin of the child, they refer solely to the union of the two /701/ spouses and say that with their sexual union the child begins to form in the mother's belly, that it continues to grow until it has attained the customary size, and that then it becomes an independent being. They limit this explanation to the development of the body. When I asked Calderon about the soul of the child, he 842 did not give me a clear answer, for in general these Fuegians are 844 rather vague about the conception of the human soul. He said: "When the child is born, it has its kétaxi, for, after all, it is alive. But who knows where this comes from!" With Nelly I talked about this repeatedly in Fred Lawrence's presence; I came to the conclusion that the Yamana lack clear ideas about the origin of the soul in the developing child.

843 The Yamana women do not understand the direct connection between the cessation of menstruation and the beginning of pregnancy.

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work, carrying about with her the little creature whom she protects as best she can" /translated from French/ (Martial:197). Hyades (Q):190 says very emphatically: "Childbirth is easy among the Fuegian women" /translated from French/. Nevertheless, even in earlier times there were occasionally difficult deliveries. In this connection Hain (s):807 exaggerates slightly when, referring to Bridges, he says that "complications and abnormal positions are not rare in childbirth" /translated from French/.

When Adelheid's first child was born, it was a dangerous case-birth, and the assistants had great difficulty keeping mother and child alive. Fearing that she would experience the same danger another time, she resorted to the preventive measure recommended to women who do not want any more children. She threw the placenta to the dogs, who devoured it completely. To prove how reliably effective this procedure is, the women constantly pointed to Adelheid who had not become pregnant again for almost two decades. Her husband, Santiago, was extremely worried about her for a long time, but he repeated what another man also told himself in a rare case of a difficult birth: "It is better that I give up having more children than that I lose my wife!" It is the husband himself who demands that the placenta be thrown to the dogs after a seriously difficult birth, or he does it himself, since he is called as soon as the woman seems to be in danger during labor. /705/ Sympathy impels him to this decision; he does not wish to expose his wife again to such pain or danger. Adelheid's sister, Elisa, had trouble, more or less, with each of her six children, and twice she had a miscarriage (p. 633). We probably should not overlook an inherited tendency in this case, for the third sister, Gertie, although she has had a few premature deliveries, has not carried a single healthy child for the normal period. No one will be able to determine whether European civilization has had a detrimental effect on these women. Their mother, who is still living, did not have such difficulties.

5. The Parents of the Newborn Child

As we have said, every Yamana woman gives birth in her own dwelling, if possible. She is assisted by an actual midwife and sometimes also by the adopted mother of the new baby. Her

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851 girl has arrived and that his wife is well. He receives the news with joy and satisfaction. Usually he still stays away for a time because the new baby must have further care. Later on he returns to his family. It is a foregone conclusion that the parents warmly welcome each child (128). It is more as a rhetorical wish than for a

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128. Hyades (4):376 mentions only briefly that Fuegian parents seem to have no preference for boys or girls.

conscious purpose that the father hopes for a boy and the mother for a daughter, unless the two have agreed on one or the other because all the rest of their children are of the opposite sex. Bridges (1):21 maintains, without qualification: "More pleasure was expressed at the birth of a son than of a daughter" /cited in English/; the reasons he (4):185, 203 gives elsewhere is not convincing: "Boys are coveted as offspring...Boys are much preferred to girls as offspring, since they are a source of strength and protection when they grow up to their parents" /cited in English/. Twins, known as

865 wulakhmen, must be regarded as an extraordinarily rare phenomenon; not a single one of the older people could remember a twin birth.

874 The newborn baby is first of all thoroughly washed (129).

129. Hahn (4):205 says briefly: "The newborn baby is immediately cleaned with fine wood shavings" /translated from French/. Bridges (4):181 is more explicit: "When the infant is born, the attending females take the child, wash it with cold water, and the soft scrapings of wood, which they also use as a towel" /cited in English/. Dabbene (5):189 gives fewer details.

This is done by the adopted mother. She squats on the ground and places the baby on her upper thighs, holding it upright with both her hands. Several times she takes a mouthful of water, keeps it in her mouth for a few moments until it has become somewhat warm, and squirts it on the child like a shower spray. Progressively the

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165 fact that "one woman 38 years old had had seven children, of whom only one had died prematurely" /translated from French/. The most striking case that I can report from recent times is the fate of Walter's children; out of a total of eleven, only two are living.

As we have said, however, it is difficult to understand the reasons for the abnormal infant mortality (166). In any case the

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166. The explanations offered by Bridges (x):202 are not very useful. He merely establishes that "few women save all their children; most die in early infancy: a disease in the throat carries many off" /cited in English/. This vague reference to a throat ailment makes us think of diphtheria which was imported by Europeans.

assumption is justified that natural feeding at the mother's breast in the first year of life is a surer guarantee of keeping the child alive than the food children eat from the second to the tenth year. During these years food seems to me far more important for the child than external protection, care, and clothing. A child that has reached the eleventh year has acquired enough physical resistance to go on living; weaklings have been eliminated by that time.

• 492 A reference to the barrenness of Fuegian women is in order here. Formerly it was certainly an extremely rare occurrence (167).

167. Hyades (q):188 also represents the view that "sterility is doubtless rare among the Fuegians; we have seen no case of a woman under 25 years old who was sterile" /translated from French/.

and various informants, among them the aged Reverend John Lawrence, could not tell me of any women, except Flora and Gertie, who were childless. If there are no children in a marriage, the woman is regarded as defective. The childless husband, mathma ŋmoskowa, takes another woman who without doubt will give him

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842 some. As a result the Yamana have the idea that sterility in marriage is solely attributable to the woman, whom they call a caxula. Thus this unusual fact (168) is not /729/ completely un-

168. The unreliability of what Hahn (a):805 maintains is obvious: "Sterility is very common in both sexes, according to Mr. Bridges, who attributes it to the precocity and the abuse of sexual relations" /translated from French/.

known, and they pity the woman who is forever denied the blessing of children. My inquiries agree with Hahn (a):805 that "spontaneous [843] abortion is very rare" /translated from French/. It happens almost always as a result of great physical exertion or very great shock.

162 According to all the observations that we know of, the sexes are somewhat unevenly distributed in favor of girls among the Yamana. The venerable John Lawrence assured me of this, and in Hyades (q):190 we read: "In our observations we have also established a slight predominance of girls over boys" /translated from French/. A census taken by Bridges in 1884 (p. 224 /untranslated, but the figures referred to are given in English/) showed that among 1,000 natives there were only 277 men as against 316 women.

845 In this tribe of Fuegians twins are just as rare as among the neighboring Selk'nam (Vol. I, 390). From former times I am familiar with only the one definite report that "Jemmy Button's eldest daughter has two beautiful twin children about four months old" /cited in English/ (MM:XI,274;1877). Later Hyades (q):190 mentions a woman 45 years old among whose ten children there was a pair of twin brothers. Finally, Holmberg (a):57 maintained: "I have a photograph of a Yahgan woman with twins, who are regarded as an extraordinary event" /translated from Spanish/. Were these witnesses really reliably informed? At any rate a twin birth is an extraordinarily rare phenomenon.

145 There are no accurate observations about the menopause, the time when menstruation ultimately ceases. Bridges and Hyades (q):189 observed pregnancy among women who were already 45 years old. Hence Fuegian women conceive until relatively late

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864 During the periods when the children of several families are staying in the same place, the two sexes are required to remain apart. The boys are summarily told to do this, usually by their father but also by other men, and the girls by their own mother. Now and then it is emphasized, in fact, repeated under threats. Thus I heard it said: "The boys belong together, and the girls should remain among themselves."

"There is nothing for a boy where girls are playing."

"You, my boy, should look for other boys to play with; the girls are playing by themselves, too."

"You are planning something improper if you agree to meet that girl [the name is given] alone in the woods. I'll /740/ punish you severely if I catch you at it." This threat was directed at Roger, one of Calderon's sons. Calderon is not very careful in bringing up his wild rascals.

864 Older children are given a special warning. The father says to his son: "If you go around with girls a great deal, you 942 will have only girls as children later on when you live in your own hut, no boys!" The mother will warn her daughter similarly: "Stay far away from boys. If you are with them too much, you will later have only boys as children when you are a mother (180)!"

180. From these admonitions we may conclude that neither boys nor girls are more preferred by parents or welcomed with greater pleasure at birth. We have already spoken of this attitude (p. 504).

864 Adults are very strict about this rule. It is everyone's duty, so to speak, to interfere with admonitions and threats if necessary, no matter whether his own or other children are involved. They do not tire of being extraordinarily watchful if they notice that a child has a strong tendency toward secret meetings with others. Adults are quite frank in discussing such observations and call each other's attention to them. They are honestly concerned about guarding a child against moral infractions, since they know only too well what goes on secretly between two little culprits. In order to prevent such acts by a child who is

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776 asked myself and also other men, above all, the capable yékamuš
773 and the most experienced old men, how that took place. No one knew the answer as to how human beings actually originated and where they came from. So to this day I do not know. I have often and persistently searched and tried to answer this question. At that time Tárúwalēm burned up the whole world and all the animals. And this I can't understand either, how afterwards everything was put in order again, how the huge fire was put out, and how he again restored plants and animals to this land. All this we do not know. In former years I often asked the experienced old people about this." A few days later, I sat in a circle of several old men, as was my custom, and quite spontaneously the conversation again drifted to these things. Richard repeated: "We really don't know exactly how everything came about at that time. Of course Watauinéiwa already existed in the very old days, for heaven was already here above the earth, there where the clouds are and where Watauinéiwa also stays. Before Lēm [sun] and Hánuxa [moon] and Akáinix [rainbow] wandered here on earth like human beings, Watauinéiwa was already here, for heaven existed before all of them. At that time women ruled. We do not know how and from where children came at that time, for none of the women who then ruled the men slept with their husbands and cohabited with them in order to conceive children. None of us can say where children came from in those days. It is only since the great /1052/ revolution that women are subordinate to the will of men. It was back in the time when the great fur seal
[825 tépé-a (Arctocephalus australis) discovered how man and woman
• 942 should unite, she underneath and he on top of her; that gives them
831] pleasure. Since then they have done it that way to this day. When husband and wife unite in this way, then children follow. So we know where our children come from now. Where they came from before that, no one can explain. We know equally as little about where Lēm and Hanuxa and the stars come from, which at that time lived on earth just like human beings. When they [the ones mentioned] and sēf [heaven], too, were here, Watauinéiwa was also here, and he was here even long before that." Thus, no Yamana can explain definitely and clearly how the visible world originated. Nevertheless it is noteworthy that a deeply thoughtful and meditative man like Maíemikens felt this gap and tried to fill it.

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

185 Nearly all work was done for hand-to-mouth existence. There was little concern for the future, and practically none for amassing wealth.

ETIQUETTE

576 Intimate friends, men or women, on meeting greeted each other with vigorous hugs and with wordless vocalizations of joy. When a guest entered a hut, he crouched by the fire without manifesting curiosity; only after a while did he begin to talk and give the news, during which time he was not interrupted. Hospitality was generously given, 574 especially to kin and friends. The guest did not verbally express his thanks for the food received. If he were from a distant place, his host presented him with some gifts on his departure. A person leaving the hut of a friend used the expression: "I will go."

576 On paying a visit it was proper, especially for women and children, to paint the face with a red or white streak or paint up otherwise. A graduate from the čiéxaus initiation rite on approaching his sponsor was expected to paint himself or herself; to go without such painting [24] was disrespectful. It was bad form to show too much eagerness in eating; a gluttonous eater was looked down upon. Belching and expec- [54] torating in the presence of others was not disapproved. Natural needs were attended to at a good distance from the hut.

834 When several families came together to camp, the respective sexes kept more or less to themselves. A man would not enter a hut where a woman was inside alone, and vice versa.

551 It was very bad form to summon or address a person, even a child, by his or her own name. In conversation the names of others were not mentioned, roundabout descriptive phrases being used instead. [195] The *Yahgan* had no expressions corresponding to our cursing or profanity.

The foregoing were some of the more significant rules of *Yahgan* etiquette, details of which are given at length by Gusinde (1937, pp. 1006–1018).

WARFARE AND CANNIBALISM

000 These have been dealt with supra under Social and Political Life.

LIFE CYCLE

842 Childbirth and infancy.—There was clear awareness of the de- 847 pendence of conception on coitus. Desire for children was marked. In some cases abortion—by mechanical, not medicinal, means—was 844 resorted to by unmarried mothers. A badly deformed or defective newborn infant was allowed to die through neglect. Delivery took place inside the hut, the father going outside and leaving the mother with women assistants. Very shortly after birth, the mother bathed